



Town of Lexington

Parking Technical Assistance

Final Report

July, 2010



Town of Lexington, Massachusetts
PARKING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

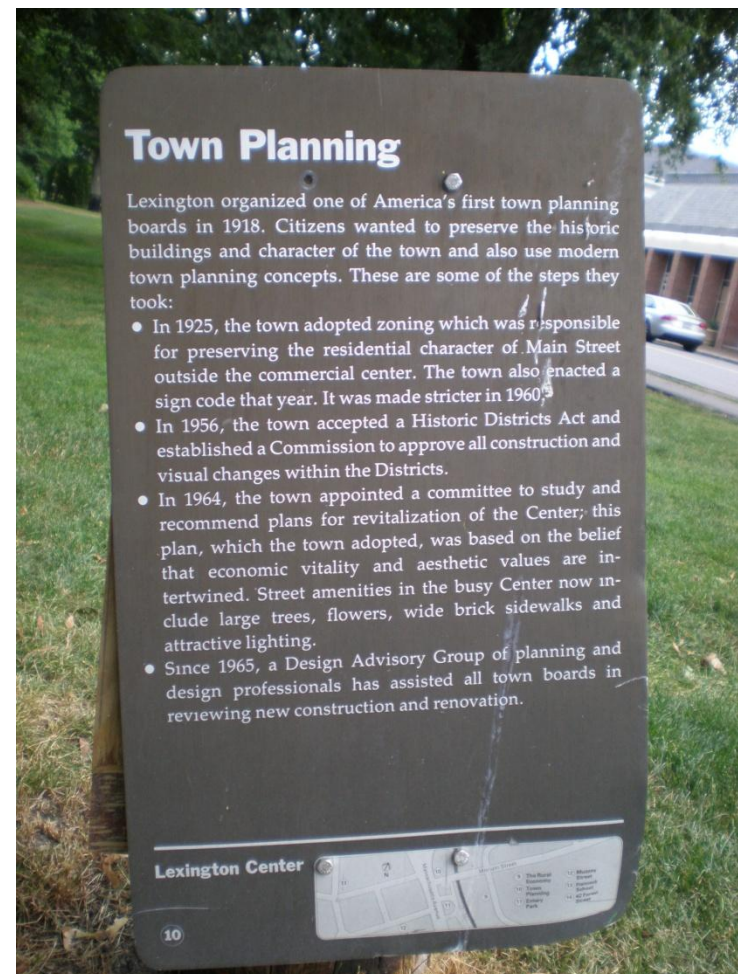
Nelson | Nygaard
consulting associates

This report was prepared on behalf of the Town of Lexington through a “Downtown Initiative” competitive grant from the State of Massachusetts’ Department of Housing and Community Development. The grant application was prepared by the Town’s Economic Development Director. The Lexington Center Committee provided oversight and review of the final presentation, parking management plan, and final report. In addition, many Lexington stakeholders were interviewed and consulted during this process in the spring of 2010, including the Board of Selectmen, Town administration, the Chamber of Commerce, local business owners and residents, and the Town’s police, public works, engineering, transportation services, and planning staff.

On behalf of DHCD, we would like to thank all stakeholders for their constructive input to this process.

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Background

While Lexington Center's significance from an historical perspective is entirely unique, its modern-day challenges are similar to many communities of its size in the United States. Few municipalities encounter the daily and annual influx of visitors that Lexington has been accommodating for generations. However, many deal with the other daily pressures that Lexington Center grapples with: the to and fro of downtown employees and merchants; the pressure of commuters and through traffic; and the impact of traffic and parking on neighborhood quality. Like many communities, Lexington faces a downtown parking problem that has lingered for many years.

The needs of Lexington Center merchants, employees, residents, and customers are also not unlike other communities with regards to parking: the expectation that parking spaces are available; the desire to find convenient parking easily; and the assurance that one's car is securely parked without incurring a penalty. Much like other communities, Lexington has only had limited success in meeting these parking needs. However, Lexington has unique modern-day characteristics that give the Town an ability to respond to this parking challenge in a constructive new manner:

- Lexington is blessed with America's highest-ridership multi-use path running directly into Lexington Center
- Proximity to regional employment centers has created a reliably strong retail and restaurant base
- The Town wisely chose to create LexPress, whose buses supplement MBTA and Liberty Ride buses with true neighborhood transit connections
- A forward-thinking population has embraced a walkable lifestyle, keeping Lexington Center vibrant all day
- The essential tools for an improved parking management system are in place already, including parking meters, a pay lot, and enforcement personnel

These characteristics have enabled Lexington to begin shifting the parking conversation to a discussion about the real benefits that parking provides: access and economic opportunity. In American downtowns similar to Lexington Center, stakeholders are acknowledging that access for many user groups does not have to be exclusively dependent on the automobile, and that convenient customer parking represents economic opportunity to businesses. This report helps frame a dialogue for Lexington Center's stakeholders as they move this small slice of Lexington's history forward to the modern day.



The development of a Lexington Center parking strategy needs the input of various stakeholders to arrive at a mutually agreeable solution. A critical component of this effort was community involvement. In addition to interviews with Town staff, members of the Center Committee, and the Board of Selectmen, the Town hosted a public workshop that was facilitated by the consulting team.

Public Open House

On the evening of May 4th, 2010, local residents, business owners, and employees were invited to participate in a hands-on “Parking Open House” designed to gather as much quantitative input as possible through several interactive components:

- Parking priorities voting exercise
- Parking needs & opportunities map mark-ups
- Background information presentation and discussion

Over 40 concerned stakeholders participated in response to flyers and email invites distributed by the Town.



You are Invited to Attend at:
Parking Open House
concerning
Parking in Downtown Lexington

Tuesday, May 4, 2010
Drop In At Any Time!
Between 5:00 PM & 7:00 PM

Where?
Cary Hall
1605 Massachusetts Avenue, Lexington

The Town of Lexington is conducting a review of parking needs. The Town is looking to develop a broad parking management strategy that will meet the needs of all users, encourage economic development, and meet parking and circulation needs for years to come.

Your input is important. We are hosting this open house to hear from you! Tell us about your parking needs, issues, and ideas for improving Lexington.

Who should attend?

- Merchants
- Business owners
- Local employees
- Nearby residents
- Regular customers
- Anyone who parks (or can't find parking) in Lexington!

For more information:
Susan Yanofsky
Economic Development Officer
Town of Lexington
781-863-0500 x 239
syanofsky@lexingtonma.gov

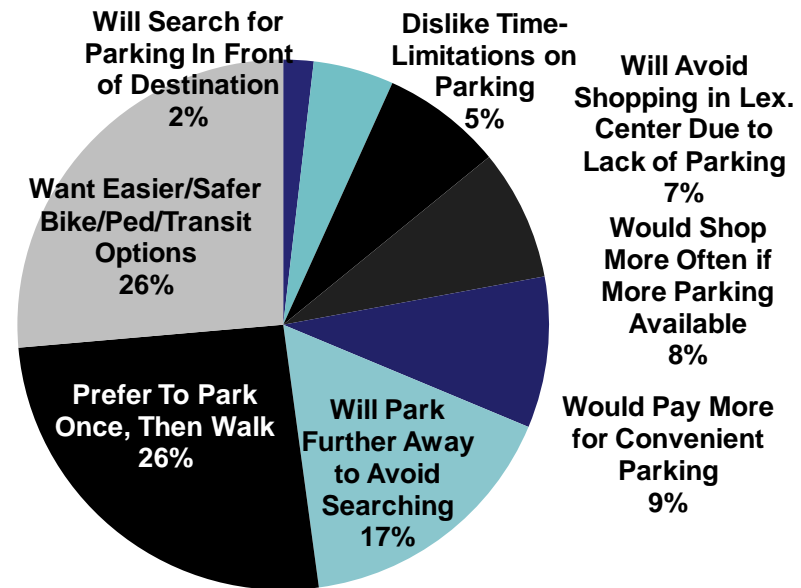


Parking Priorities Voting Exercise

Open house participants were invited to “vote” for the parking-related priorities that were of greatest concern to them. Faced with over a dozen typical parking issues, participants could vote



no more than six times for one or more issues. The results demonstrated that many sought to make the Center more walkable, bikeable, and transit friendly, enabling a “park-once” environment where parking more remotely and walking is acceptable.

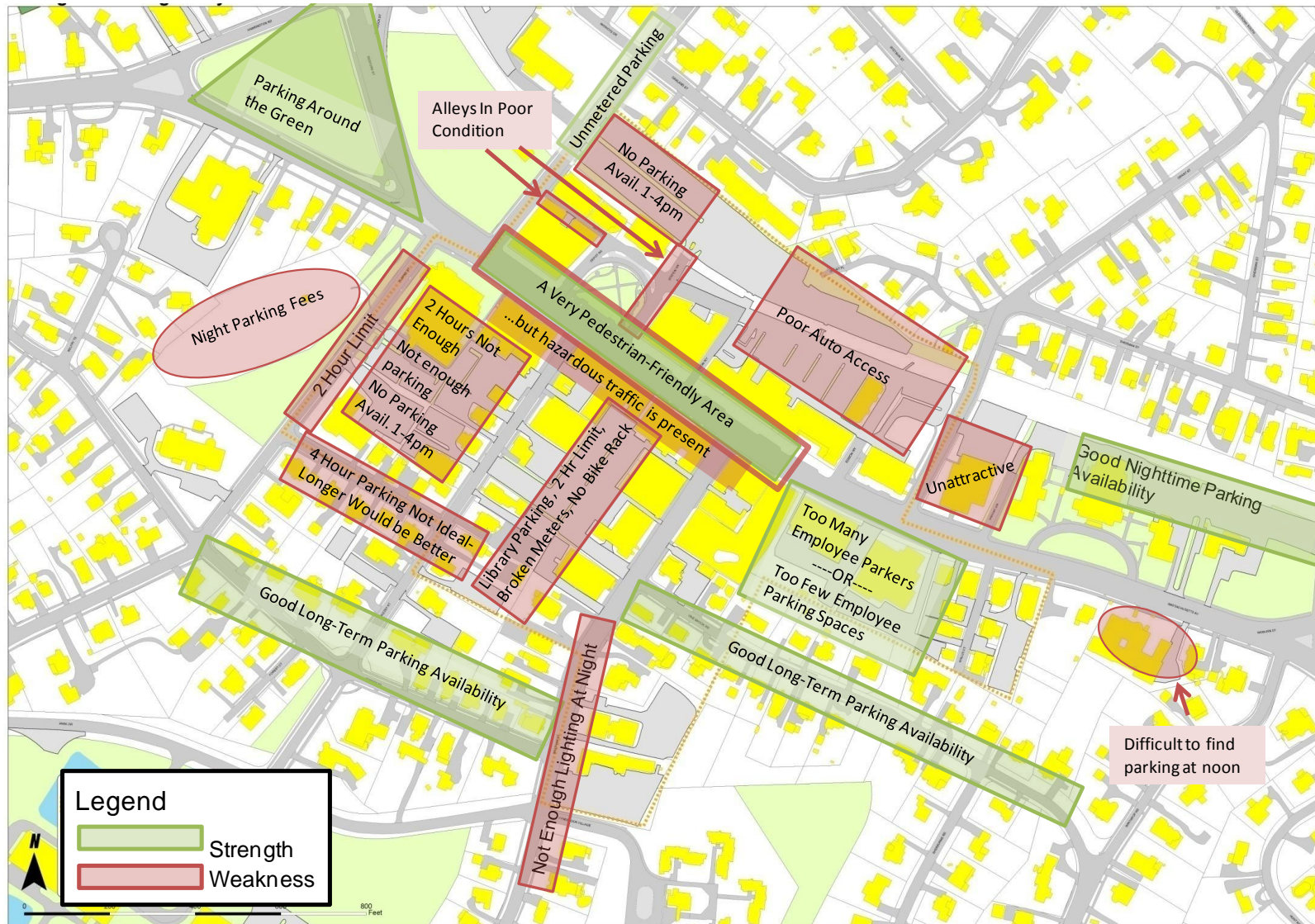


Needs & Opportunities Map Exercise

Participants also were welcomed to share specific comments about what works and doesn’t work in Lexington Center around any one of several identical maps. Participants and facilitators marked up maps directly to indicate specific places of concern or where good ideas for possible changes could occur. All maps were compiled into the electronic versions on the following pages which summarize strengths and weakness as well as suggested changes for Lexington Center parking.



Strengths and Weaknesses of Lexington Center Parking



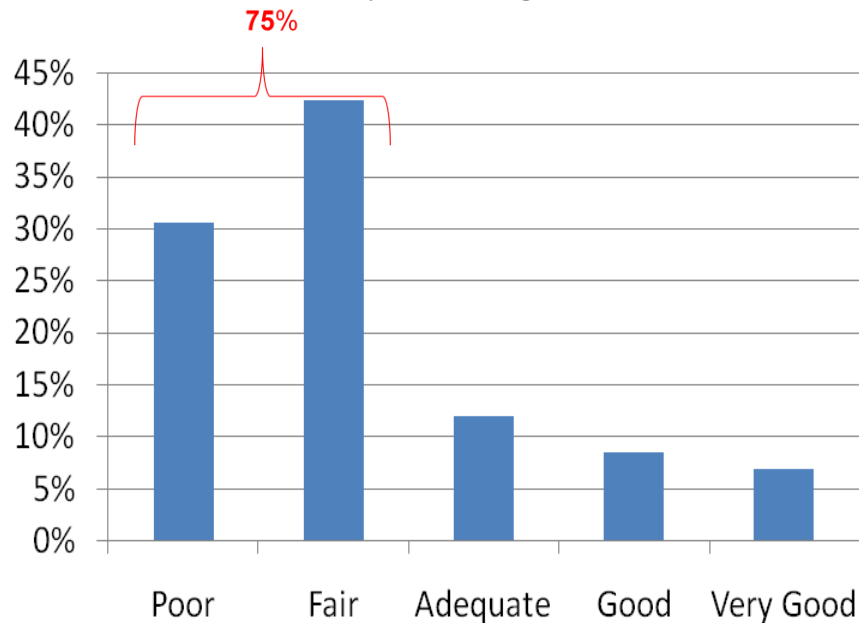
Recommended Improvements to Lexington Center Parking



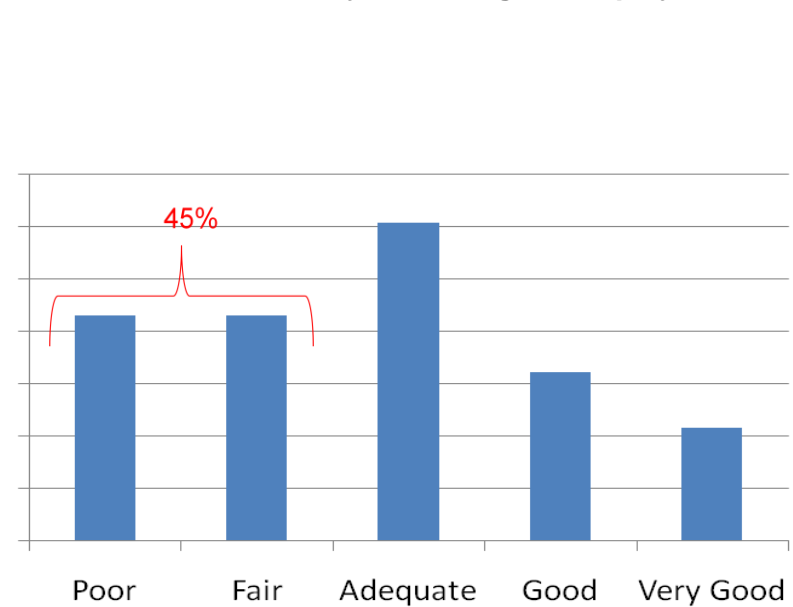
Parking Survey Results, 2005

A Town of Lexington parking survey conducted in 2005 helps to evaluate the perception of Lexington Center parking. While over half of Lexington Center employees found parking availability to be at least adequate, three-quarters of merchants' customers found it to be fair to poor.

Perceived Availability of Parking for Customers



Perceived Availability of Parking for Employees

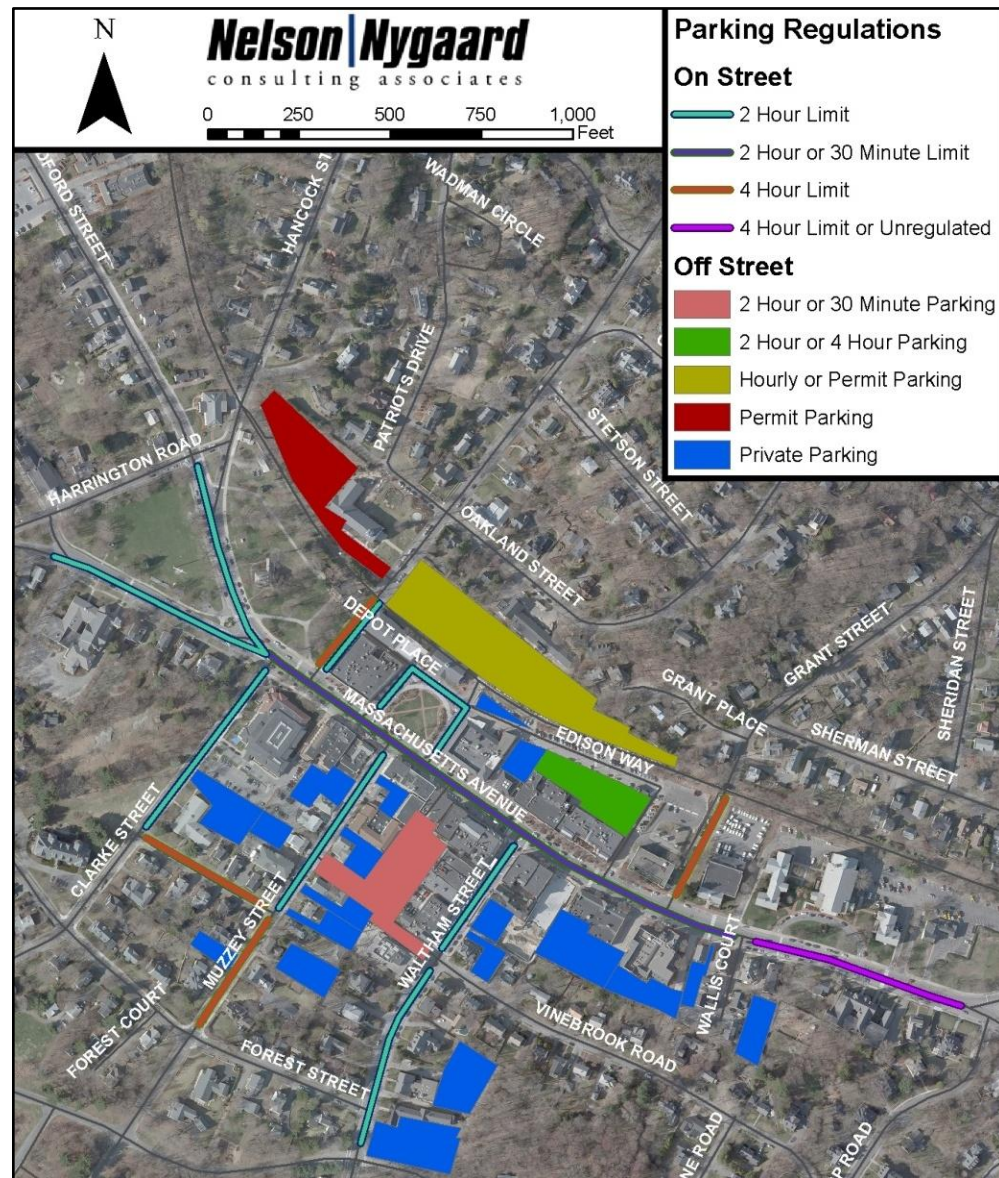
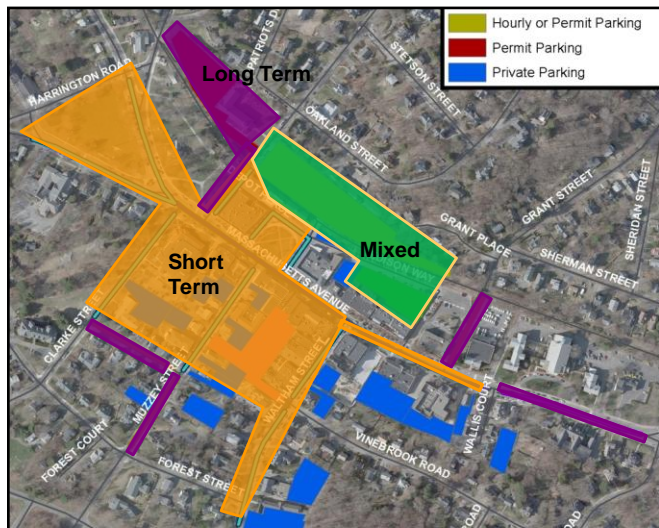


Lexington Center Parking Supply

Based upon an inventory conducted by VHB Inc. in 2001, there are approximately 1,500 public and private spaces in Lexington Center. This supply has remained relatively constant.

Number of Spaces		
On-street	267	18%
Public Off-street	571	40%
Private Off-street	629	42%
TOTAL	1,467	

The time-limited regulations that are in effect essentially create a large amount of short-term parking with significantly fewer places for long-term employee or commuter parking.



Land Occupied by Parking

It is worth noting the impact that Lexington's parking supply has on other land uses. The map below shows in red the areas in and near Lexington Center that are dedicated to parking.

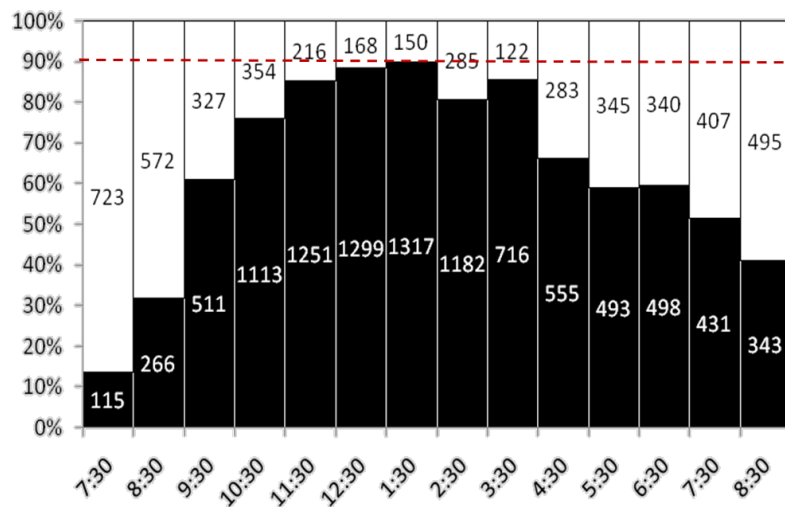


Parking Utilization Profiles

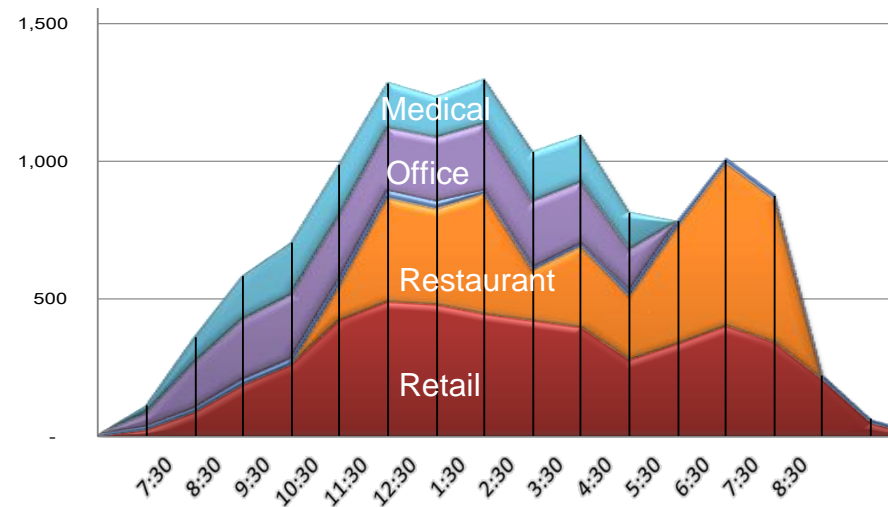
The VHB study observed the accumulation of cars within each regulatory zone and each parking lot in Lexington Center over the course of both an average weekday and an average weekend in the fall of 2001. The utilization profile for any group of spaces in Lexington Center can be charted for each hour from 7:30am until 8:30pm. Looking at the profile for all spaces combined reveals a clear bell curve that follows the typical parking demand profile of many downtowns on a weekday, with peak accumulation occurring around the lunch hour. By 1:30pm, 90-percent of all Lexington Center spaces are occupied with 150 vacant. In the parking industry, this utilization rate is considered the ideal maximum for a parking facility.

The profile for all Lexington Center spaces behaves like many downtowns where drivers often take care of multiple errands after parking once. This shared nature of downtown parking is a characteristic that can be modeled through an Urban Land Institute (ULI) shared parking model. The Town provided a land use table for Lexington Center that was entered into this model, which combines the average hourly parking demand profiles of many uses into one curve for an entire downtown. With typical adjustments for factors such as internal trip capture and parking pricing, the ULI shared parking model's bell curve mirrors well the observed utilization profile. Essentially, Lexington Center is doing a very good job of sharing parking, with few inefficiencies. Employees do errands or eat lunch nearby; visitors walk to multiple destinations after parking; and nearby residents frequently walk into Lexington Center.

Lexington Center Utilization Profile



ULI Shared Parking Model for Lexington Center



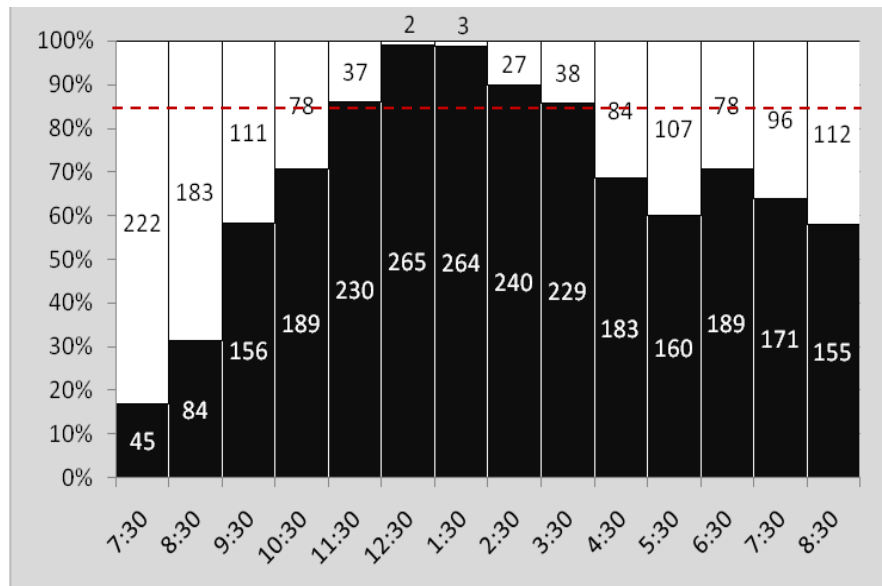
Utilization of Public Parking – Weekdays

Looking specifically at the use of public parking in Lexington Center reveals that there are no spaces left for customers or visitors around the lunch hour. Public space utilization has exceeded the 90-percent effective capacity for a parking facility, filling almost every on- or off-street space that is available to the general public. While the parking system as a whole works well, the public system is beyond practical capacity during lunchtime.

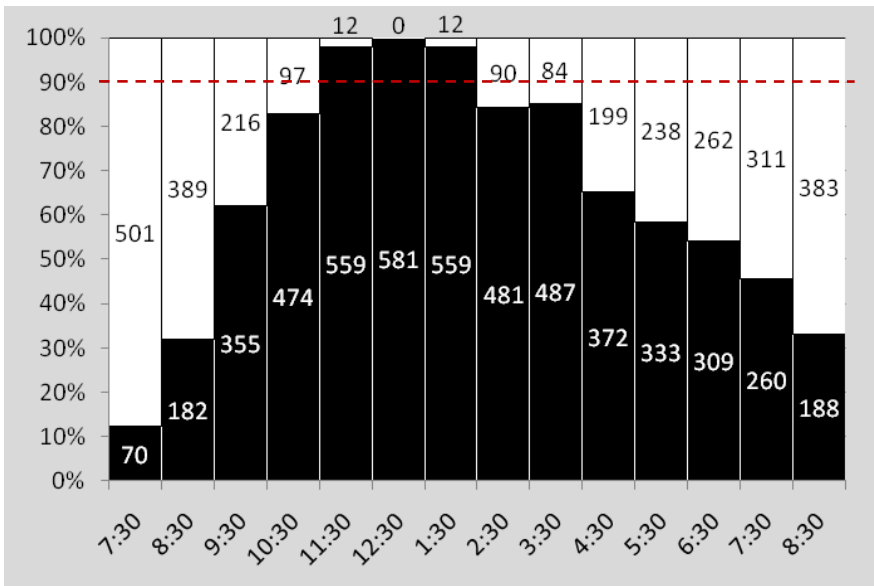
This peak demand drops off sharply after lunch. On-street spaces plateau into the evening hours, but off-street space utilization plummets to 30-percent. In the morning, utilization of on- and off-street spaces is below 20-percent before 8am and does not approach capacity until noon. This data clearly shows that Lexington Center's public parking problems are narrowly confined to lunchtime. This characteristic varies slightly when observing the utilization profiles of each Town lot on the following page: the smaller Edison Way and Waltham Street lots show high utilization from before lunch through to dinner.



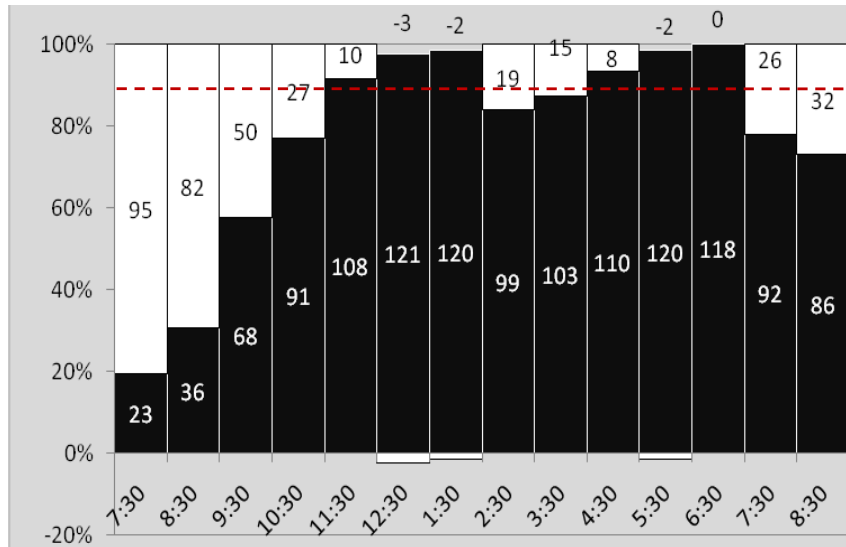
Public On-Street Utilization (267 spaces)



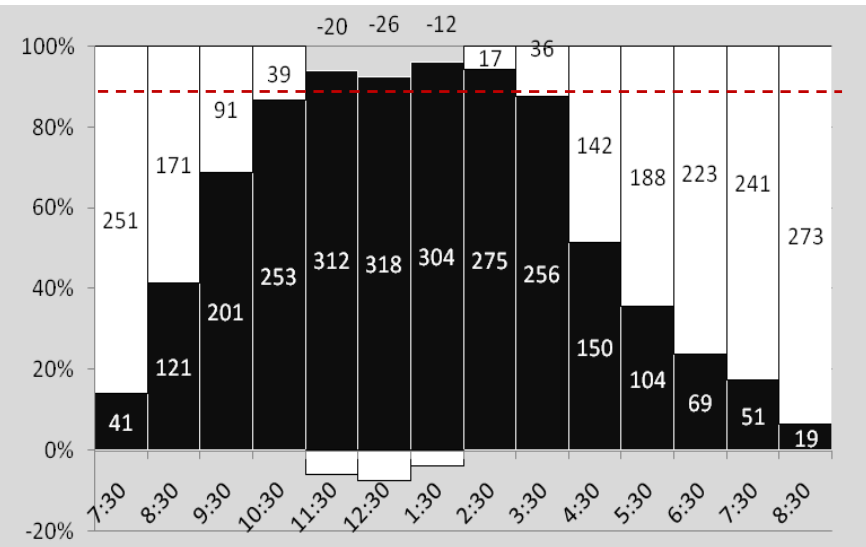
Public Off-Street Utilization (571 spaces)



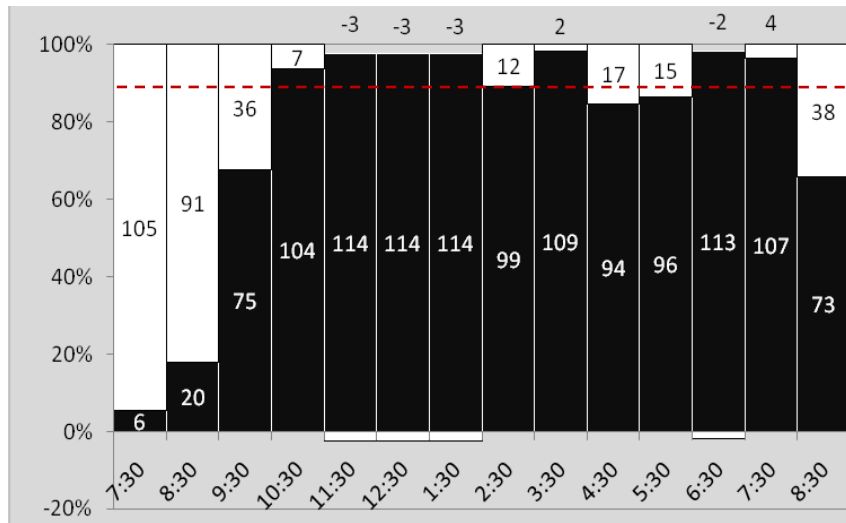
Edison Way Lot Utilization (128 spaces)



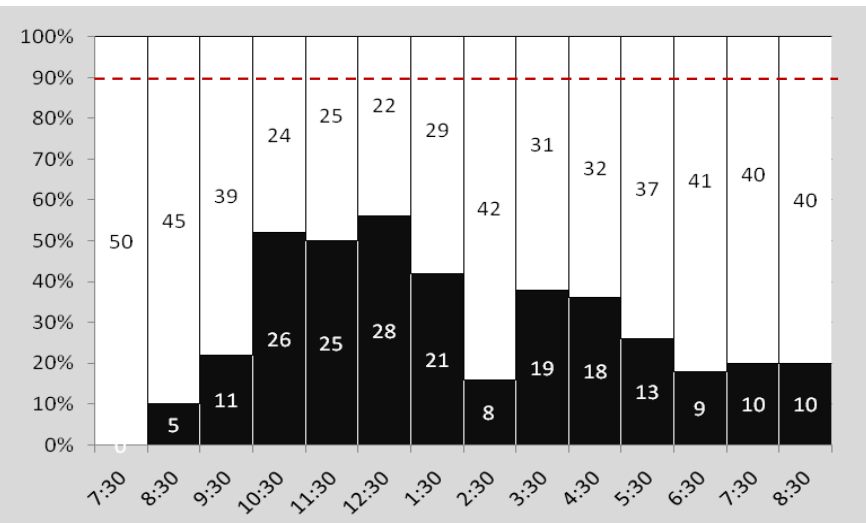
Depot Square Lot Utilization (292 spaces)



Waltham Street Lot Utilization (111 spaces)



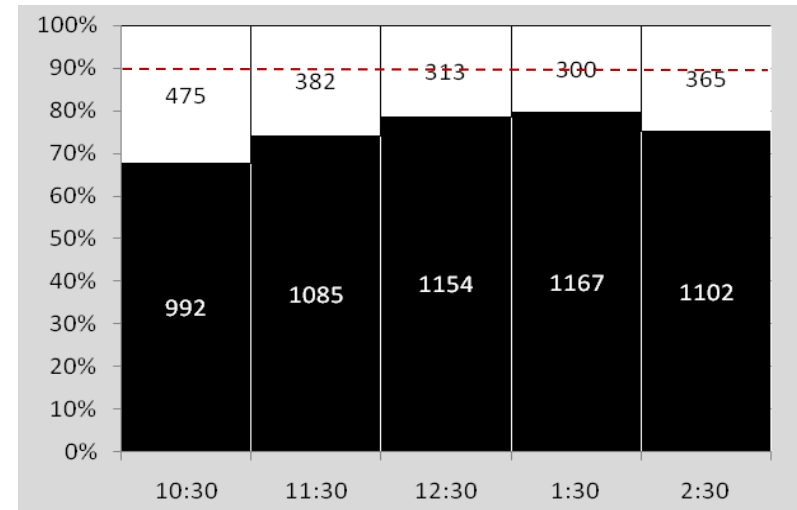
Church Lot Utilization (50 spaces)



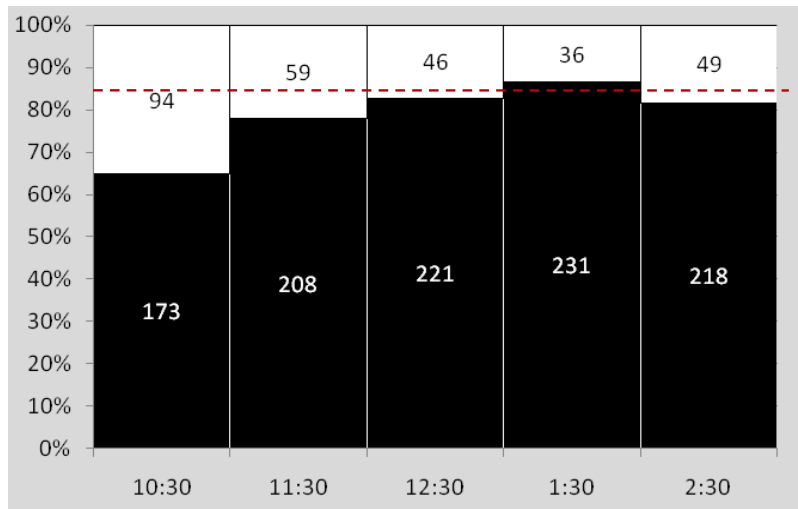
Utilization of Public Parking – Weekends

Saturday utilization profiles in Lexington Center show less overall utilization during the peak period in the middle of the day than is seen on a weekday. Utilization does not exceed 80-percent at the lunchtime peak. However, public on-street spaces do exceed the ideal on-street utilization rate of 85-percent during the peak hour of accumulation. Public lots do not exceed 85-percent, generally demonstrating that some capacity remains in the public parking system on a weekend.

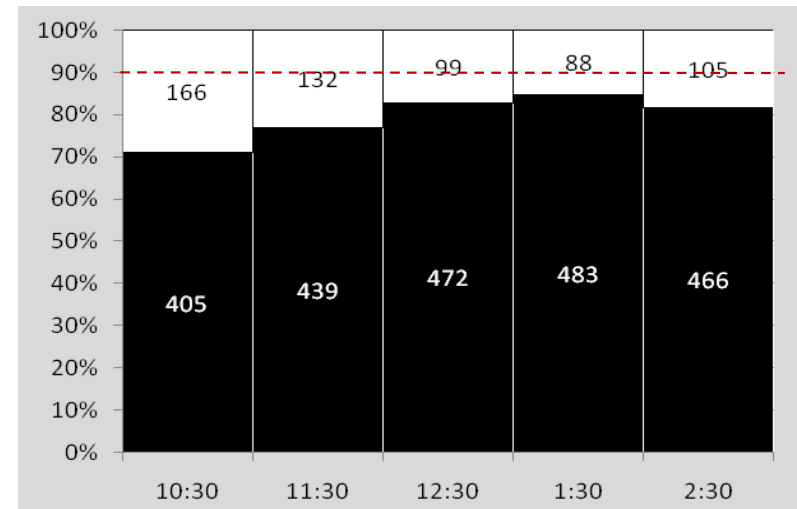
Lexington Center Utilization Profile -



Public On-Street Utilization – Weekend (267 spaces)



Public Lot Utilization – Weekend (571 spaces)



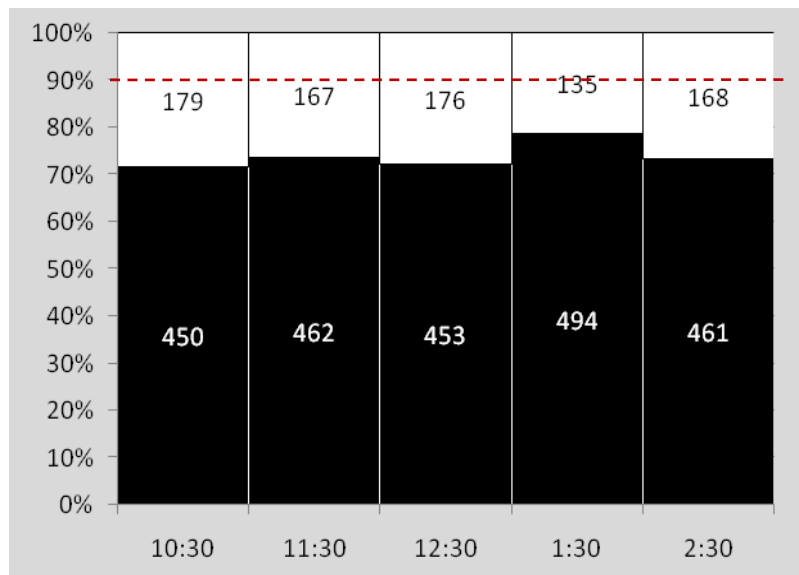
Utilization of Private Parking

A clear distinction exists between the utilization of public and private parking in Lexington Center. While public parking exceeds capacity during weekday lunch hours and is well-utilized the remainder of the workday and on weekends, private parking utilization does not exceed 80-percent on weekdays and 75-percent on weekends.

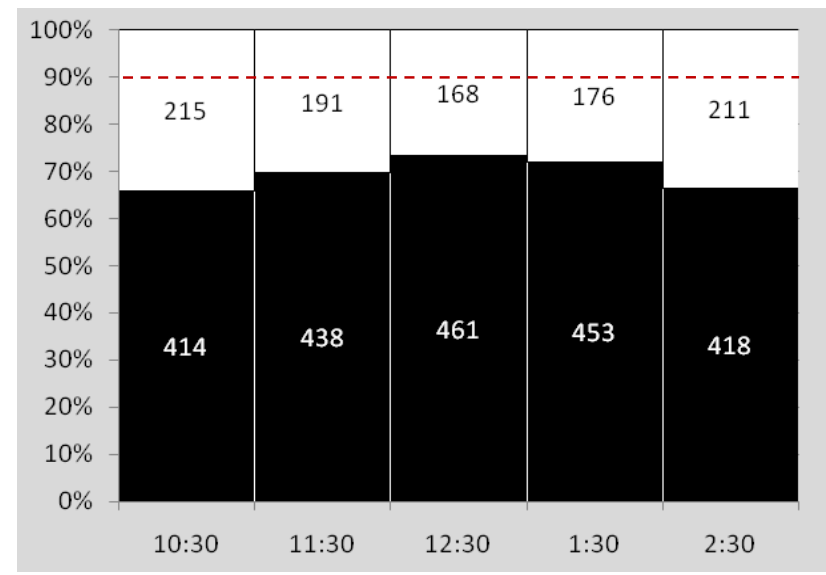
This is not atypical in downtowns where private parking is coveted and thereby not shared with other users very. Unfortunately, this protective stance is inefficient in many ways. First, dedicated parking is very inefficient since any given space is typically never used more than 8 hours in a day and often much less without the benefit of shared or public access. Secondly, the land area consumed by unshared private parking is much greater than what would be needed in a shared facility at higher utilization rates. Finally, this lost land efficiency is lost land value, limiting the amount of infill development potential.



All Private Lots on a Weekday



All Private Lots on a Weekend



Spatial Analysis of Parking Utilization

An important part of understanding how parking is managed in any downtown is being able to describe how various parking facilities and segments of on-street parking interact with each other throughout the course of a day. A chart of hourly utilization rates for one specific location is valuable, but seeing how that location behaves among others located nearby can reveal patterns and trends not evident in numbers alone.

Using the data prepared by VHB in 2001, a series of maps were developed based on the parking inventory map above. These show weekday parking utilization for all individual parking lots and block faces throughout Lexington Center simultaneously for each hour of the day. Colors have been assigned for the percentage of spaces utilized at each location based on notable breaks used to evaluate the adequacy of a parking facility: “cool” blue equals 0-50% utilization; “safe” green equals 51-75% utilization; “caution” yellow equals 76-85% utilization; “warning” red is over 85% utilization; and “critical” magenta denotes parking beyond the marked capacity.

These maps help to clearly illustrate how Lexington Center parking fills up until lunchtime then begins to unload through the afternoon and evening.



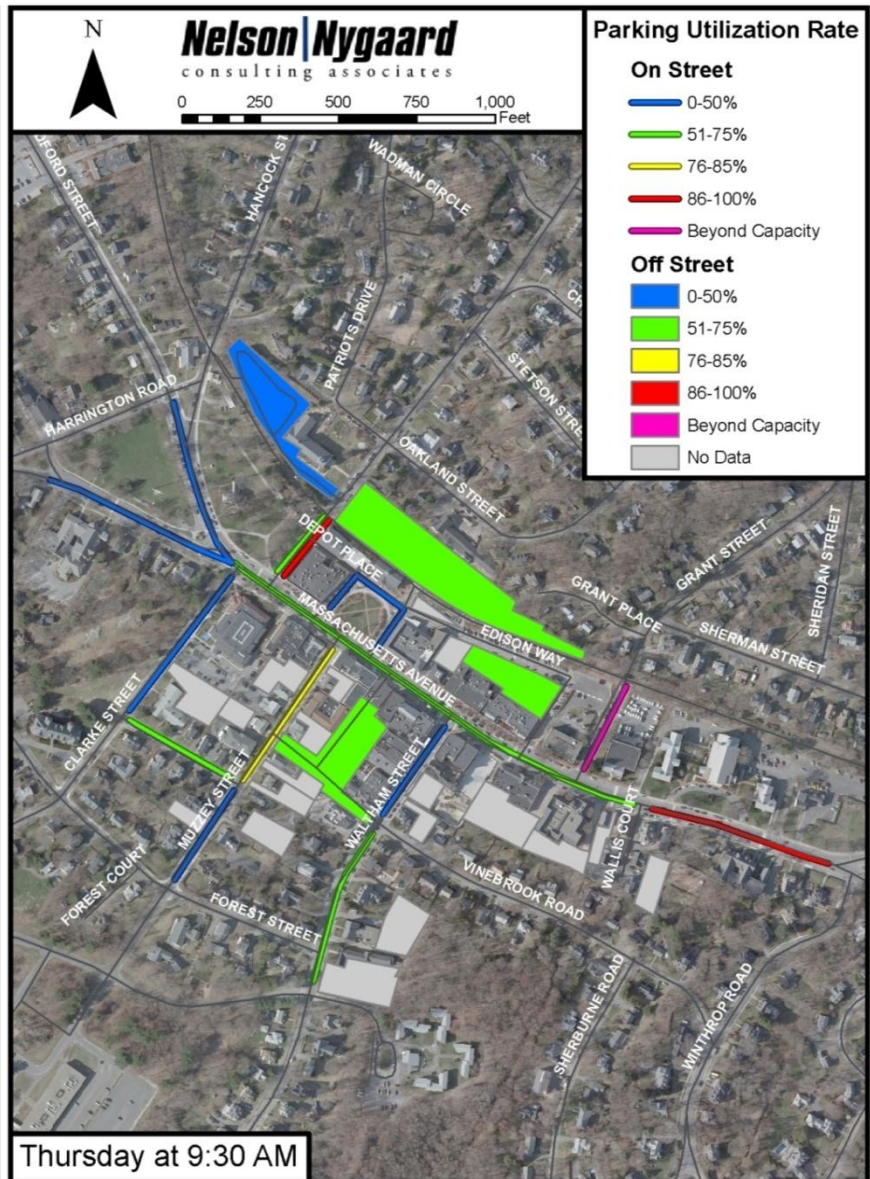
Edison Way Lot

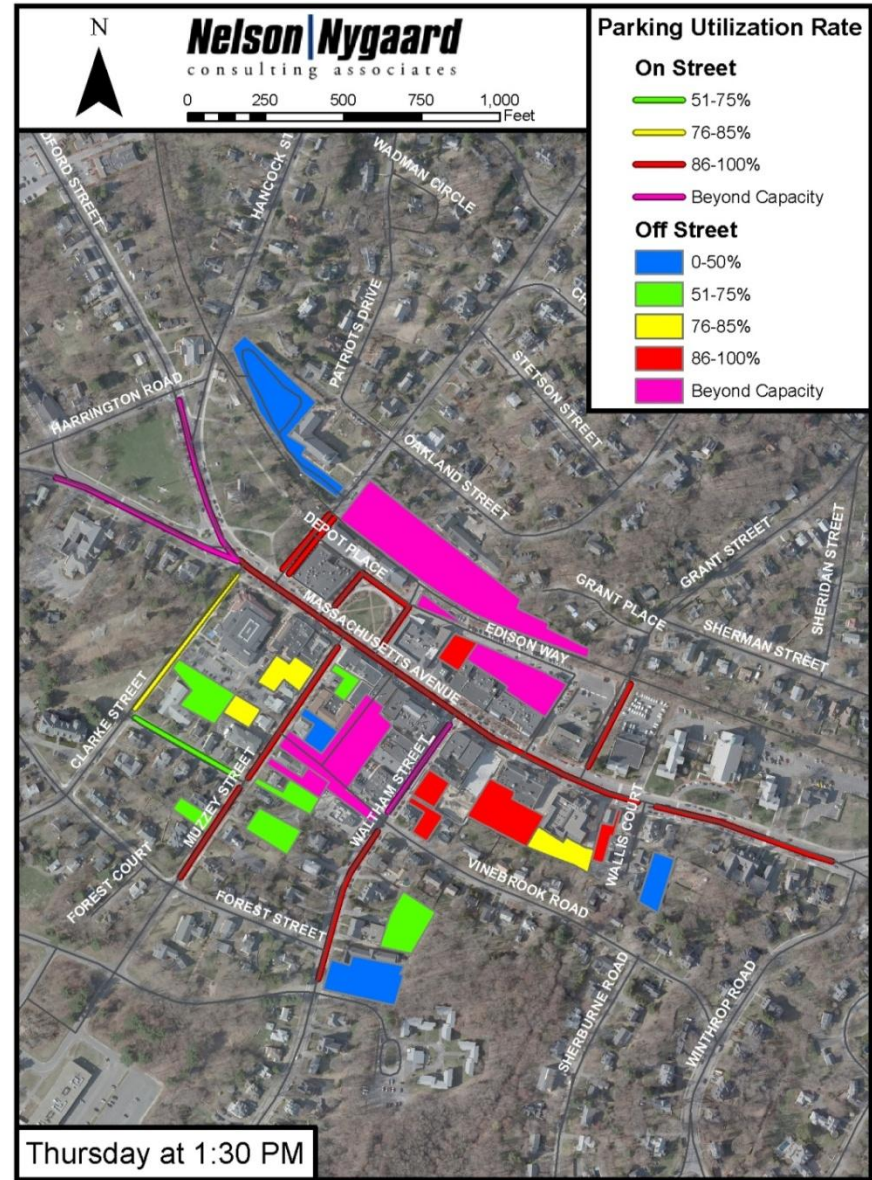
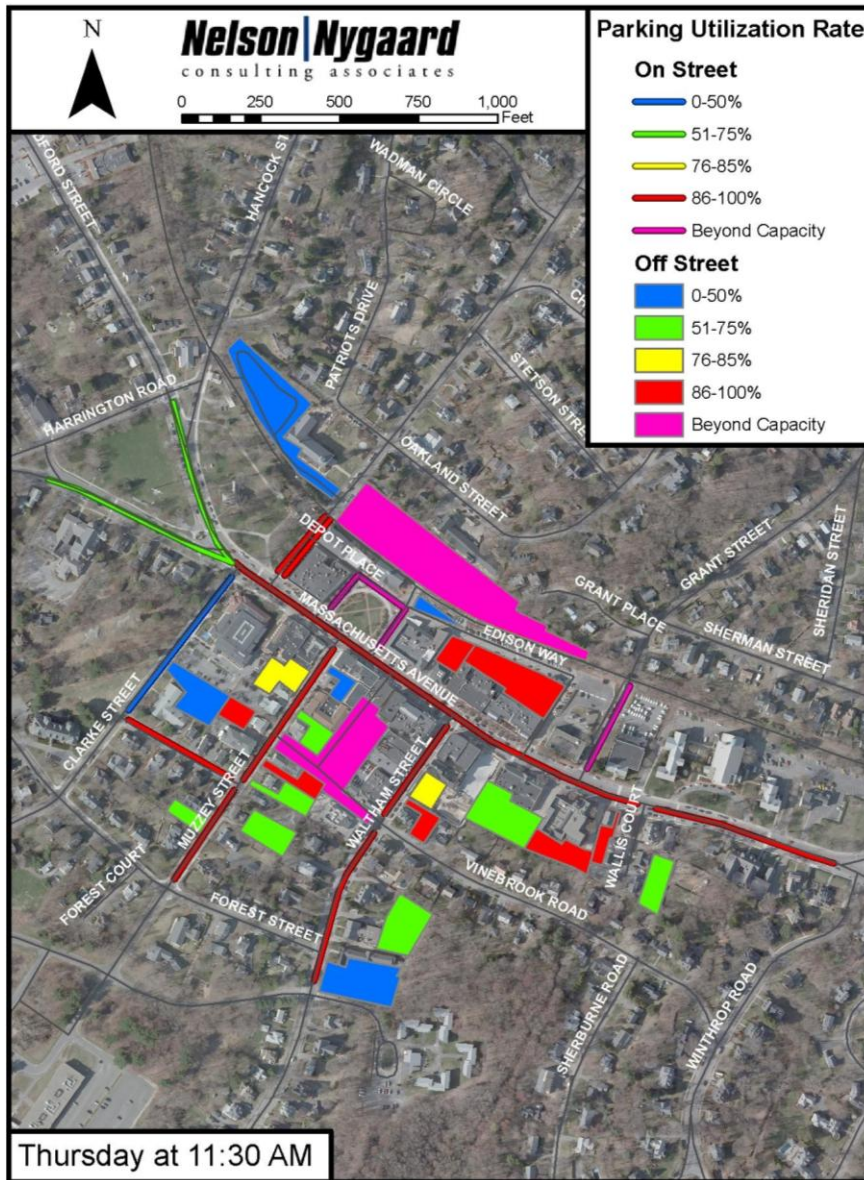


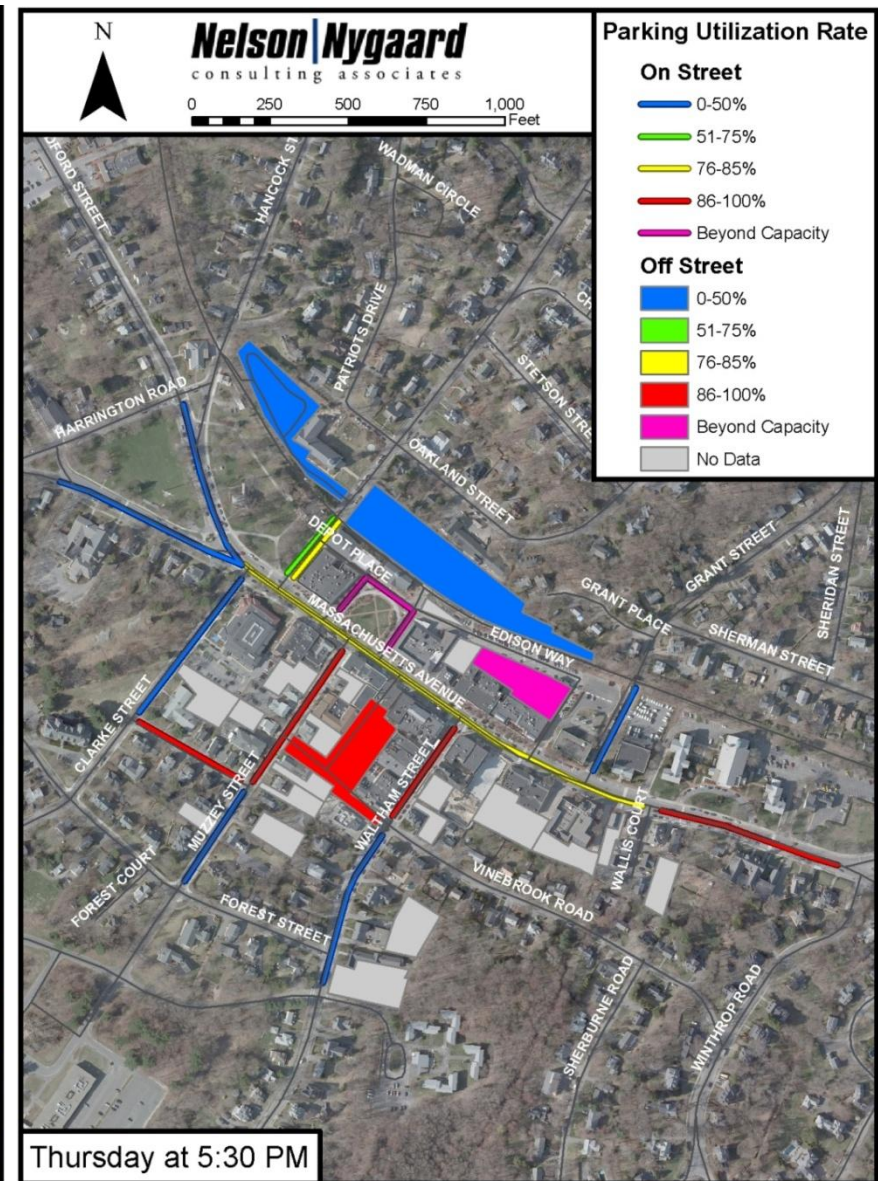
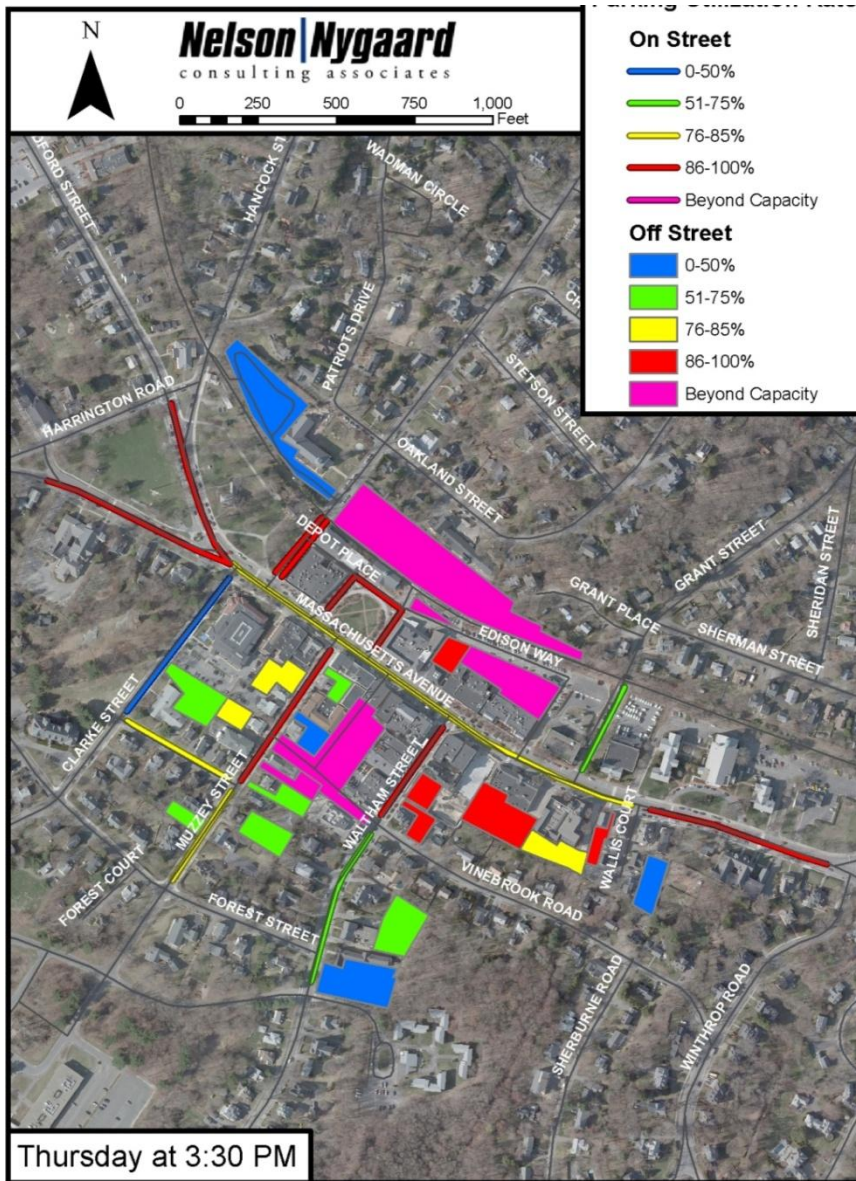
Depot Square Lot

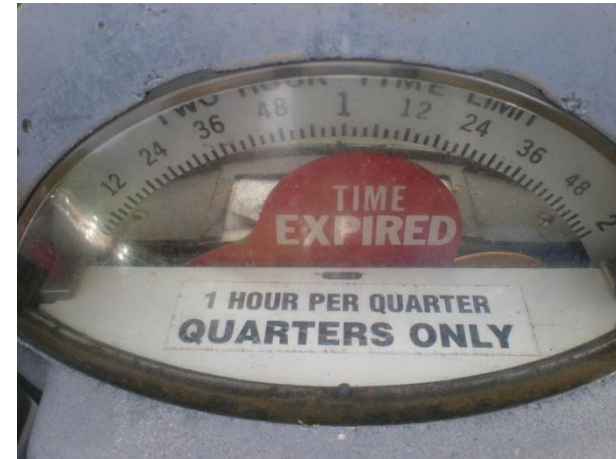
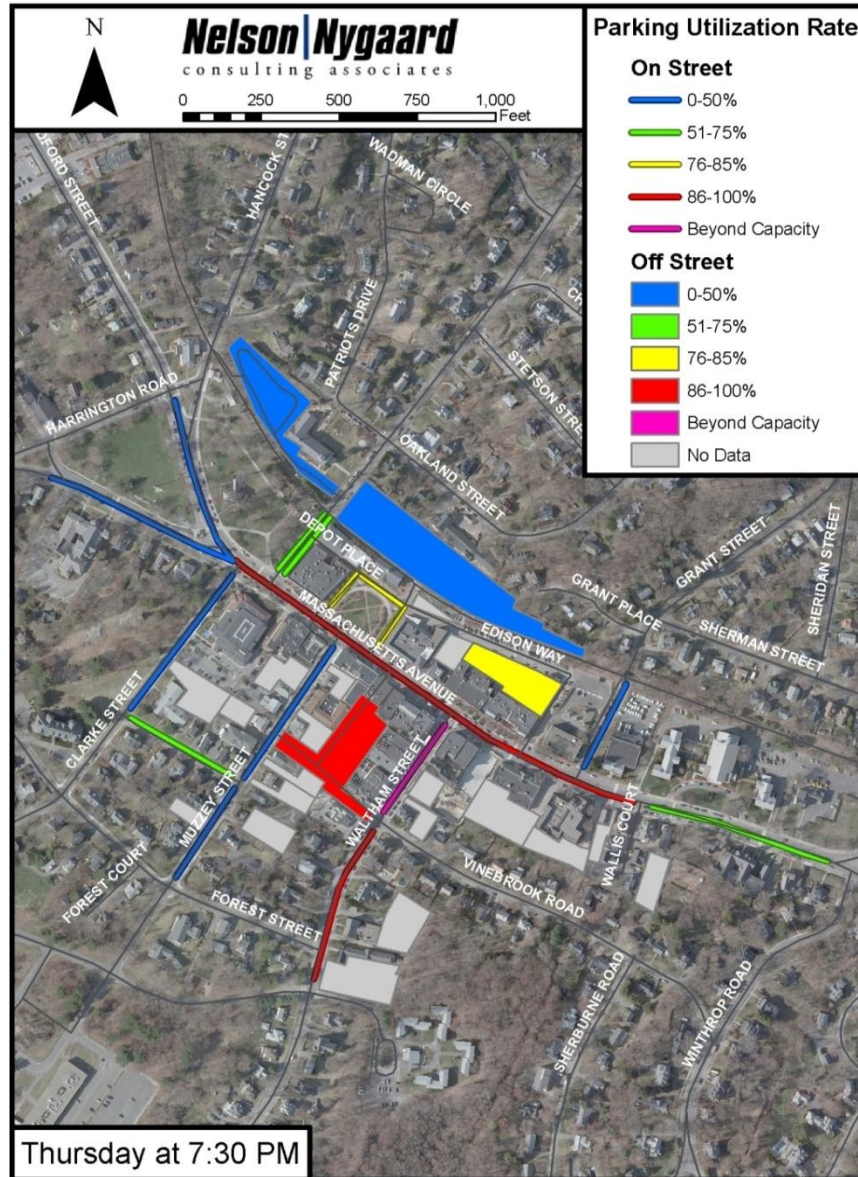


Massachusetts Ave.







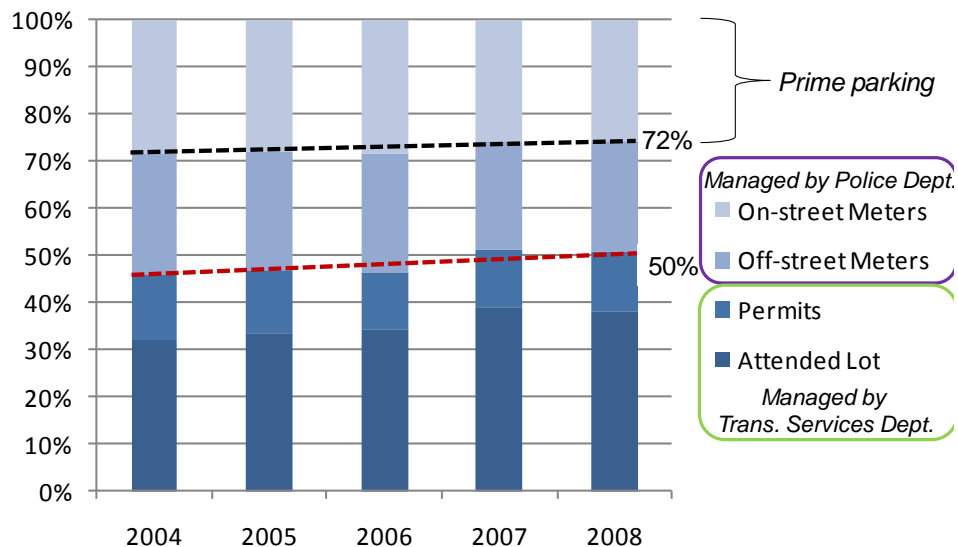
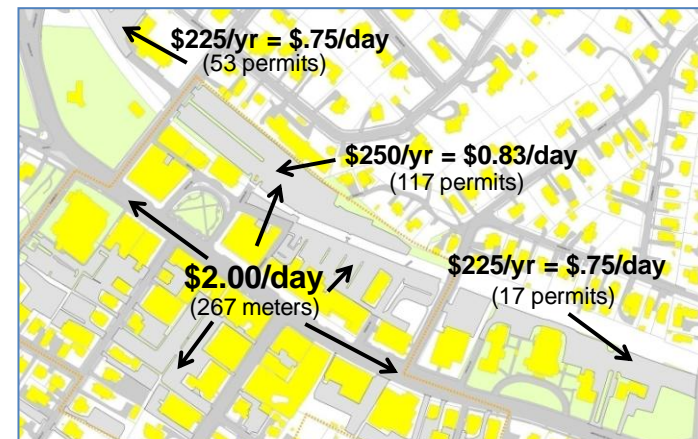


Parking Pricing and Revenues

Parking in Lexington Center is managed by two entities, each responsible for 50% of Lexington's parking fee revenues: the Police Department manages all hourly paid parking on-street and in the Edison Way and Waltham Street lots; the Transportation Services Department manages the attended Depot Square lot and administers the annual pass program. This division of responsibility may contribute to the unbalanced pricing and revenues observed in Lexington Center.

All short-term parking is priced at \$0.25/hour. The daily max in the Depot Square lot is \$2.00, which is effectively the daily max on-street for those feeding meters before the time-limit expires. This flat pricing is not reactive to demand, so less desirable remote spaces are no cheaper than prime spaces. Long-term parking rates of \$225-250/year equate to a daily rate as low as \$0.75. This amounts to a dramatic perk for those able to afford and purchase an annual pass. As a result, there is a waiting list for annual passes, forcing many other full-time workers who cannot afford the one-time payment to pay as much as \$500/year (paid daily) to park in the same lot.

The revenues recorded by the Town over the last few years help to demonstrate the effect of these pricing imbalances. While prime on-street spaces are generally considered the most valuable parking in a downtown, in Lexington they account for 28% of parking revenue – even though they are 32% of the public supply.



Meanwhile, long-term permit parkers represent nearly one-quarter of the daily public parking demand (187 of 838 available spaces), but barely represent 12-percent of total revenues. These same permit parkers utilize a third of the Depot Square lot utilization, but barely account for a quarter of that lot's revenue – suggesting that the current long-term discount is sacrificing Town revenue at the expense of short-term customer parking.

Number of Spaces		Public:	
On-street	267	18%	32%
Public Off-street	571	40%	68%

Short-Term Recommendations

The following recommendations are intended to serve as guidance for Lexington Center stakeholders seeking to implement changes in Lexington's parking management system. They reflect the conclusions of the consulting team that has visited Lexington Center, reviewed the data presented above, and talked with its many stakeholders. They are informed by an understanding of parking management best practice as evidenced in a number of communities across America that recognize two important realities: that automobile parking is not the sole means of access to thriving communities; and that poorly managed parking spaces hide the keys to unlocking economic opportunity for local merchants and business owners. Full implementation of these recommendations will not be possible without continued stakeholder coordination and a shared commitment to finally fixing the parking problem in Lexington Center. Fortunately, Lexington has evolved to a point in its history where real change is possible with relatively little effort.

The following seven short-term recommendations (in order of importance) should be implemented as simultaneously as possible.

1) Identify a Parking Champion

No recommendation in this report will proceed successfully without a clear champion guiding the various stakeholders needed to make it succeed. Many recommendations take time, effort, or money that will only be realized with leadership that keeps the coalition of concerned parties together and focused on the goals of improving access and economic opportunity. Furthermore, few recommendations can stand alone and be successful without implementation of the entire package of recommendations. Parking in any downtown is just one part of a complex multi-modal economy where every parking motorist becomes a pedestrian, every pedestrian must confront cars, and every parked car occupies a valuable piece of land. Addressing only one aspect of this system may adversely impact other interdependent parts, potentially worsening access – or worse yet – economic opportunity.

2) Adopt a Parking Availability Goal

In order to eliminate the perception that parking is not available on-street, it is ideal to have at least one empty space per block face in a downtown, ensuring easy customer access to businesses. This typically equates to about 1 out of 8 spaces free, or a target of 15-percent vacant per block face. Lexington should adopt this goal for any Lexington Center parking management programs.

Similarly a goal of at least 10-percent vacancy in off-street lots should be adopted. If any facility has less availability, it is effectively at its functional capacity.

3) Implement Performance-Based Pricing

Flat pricing throughout Lexington Center (with the notable exception of business permit holders) has provided no incentive for longer-term parkers to park more remotely – away from prime “front-door” block faces near the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Waltham Street. Furthermore, the \$0.25 per hour fee is considered more of a nuisance when the real limiting factor for most is the penalty of getting a \$10 parking ticket when the time-limit is exceeded.

In order to improve availability at prime locations and achieve a 15-percent availability goal by block face, Lexington should begin a performance-based pricing program coupled with the lengthening or elimination of time-limits. Motorists are sensitive to parking pricing differences and will respond positively to areas with lower cost, unless they are more urgently in need of a convenient space – in which case a higher price is worthwhile if it frees up prime spaces by discouraging others. This is especially true of short-term visits, where a high hourly parking rate may only need to be paid for 15 minutes before the customer continues on their trip and frees up a space for the next potential customer.

Meanwhile, eliminating time-limits allows visitors the flexibility of staying as long as needed – especially at dining hours when a little dessert might exceed the current 2-hour limit and risk a ticket; or during a movie, when patrons are forced to use the Depot Square lot even if they were willing to pay more to park more conveniently. Eliminated time-limits also incentivizes employees to park in cheaper remote spots if they know they won't need to worry about getting a ticket.

The success of performance-based pricing and eliminated time-limits is well-documented in successful applications in Washington DC, New York City, and San Francisco, as well as smaller communities like Walnut Creek, Ann Arbor, and Redwood City. The map and tables below suggest a preliminary pricing structure with resulting revenues. These are by no means the firm pricing that Lexington should implement permanently – rather, the Town should adjust pricing to achieve its 15-percent availability goal on-street. It may be that higher rates are necessary in the core, while lower rates (even free) are appropriate remotely. Performance based pricing should also apply to the Town lots, with greatly elevated pricing for the Depot Square lot and a significant discount for parking at the church and Town Hall lots. Business permit parking may also be warranted on-street, especially around the Battle Green where historical considerations prevent the use of parking meters.

Revised On-Street Fee Structure

High-Demand Spaces	153
Hours of Operation	8am to 8pm
Hourly Fee	\$0.50
Moderate-Demand Spaces	114
Hours of Operation	9am to 5pm
Hourly Fee	\$0.25

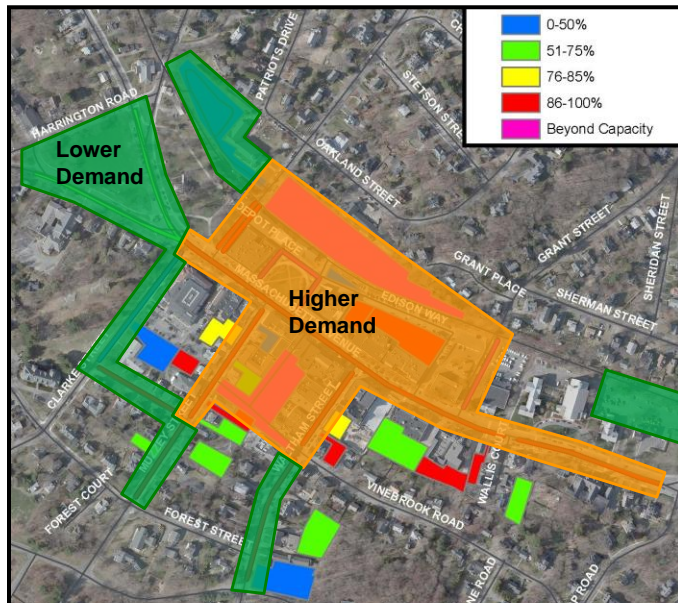
Revised Lot Fee Structure

Attended Lot Permits	
Monthly Fee	\$50
Hourly Fee	\$0.25
Church & Town Hall Lot Permits	
Monthly Fee	\$25
All Off-Street Lots - hourly	
Hourly Fee	\$0.25

Potential Annual Revenues

	Average 2004-2008	With Performance- Based Pricing
Lots	\$130,000	\$142,000
Permits	\$47,000	\$110,000
Meters	\$190,000	\$225,000
Total	\$367,000	\$478,000

It should be noted that business permit prices should no longer be based on an annual fee. While it could be paid annually, the pricing should be monthly with monthly payment available. This helps allow those without the resources for a one-time bulk payment to take advantage of remote parking discounts while revealing the cost of parking to others – possibly encouraging them to consider using alternative modes during certain times of the year.



Potential Annual Revenues

	Average 2004-2008	Proposed
Lots	\$130,000	\$142,000
Permits	\$47,000	\$110,000
Meters	\$190,000	\$225,000
Total	\$367,000	\$478,000

The elimination of time-limits will lead to less enforcement revenue for the Town. Fortunately, it also leads to more effective enforcement as more territory can be covered by personnel in any given shift since there will be less violations. In all documented cases of performance-based pricing, new parking revenues more than made up for declining ticket revenues. Users of these parking systems were far happier with the “carrot” of pay-as-you-go than with the “stick” of ticketing every two-hours.

4) Improved Parking Information

Lexington already employs two strong parking information programs in Lexington Center: a parking lot map and an historic signing program. With some minor improvements, each could be made more effective.

- Parking Map** – The Lexington Center Parking information card is an excellent resource for businesses to hand out to customers visiting Lexington, and it should be distributed more broadly and posted in obvious visitor locations and bulletins. With improvements like those suggested here, it could be more valuable. More importantly, it should become a prominent feature on the Town’s website so that those planning a visit will know in advance where to find long-term parking.



- Parking Signing** – Lexington recently installed a number of elegant and historic wayfinding signs in Lexington Center that convey a number of destinations, including parking locations. Unfortunately, these signs are tailored more to those on foot near the signs as their font sizes are too small to be read from a moving vehicle or even from a pedestrian's perspective on the other side of a street looking to find the way back to their parked car. As a simple retrofit suggestion, a larger (minimum 18-inch) square version of identical format displaying the circled "P" and arrows could be placed above each of these new signs to better inform motorists.



5) Establishment of a Shared Parking Program

The data collected by VHB in 2001 included midday utilization counts for private parking lots in Lexington Center. Their utilization profiles revealed a significant amount of underutilized private parking at periods of the day when there was little vacancy in the public parking system. In addition, a simple aerial view of many of these lots – particularly west of the Waltham Street public lot – reveals that a lot of potential parking capacity is wasted by redundant circulation, curb cuts, and fence lines. These lots represent opportunities to expand parking supply for all stakeholders' benefit, but the Town must become a facilitator to ensure private property rights are preserved, liability concerns are overcome, and development potential is not lost.

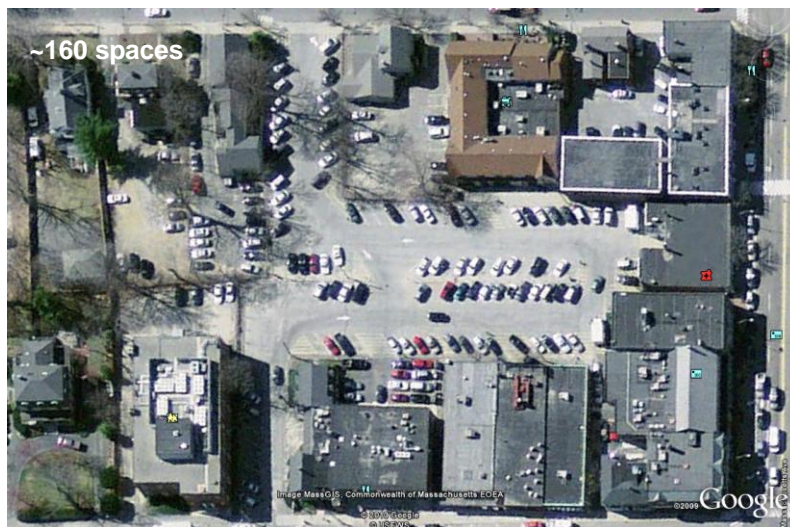
Therefore, it is recommended that the Town establish a shared parking program fund consisting of two key elements:

- **Lexington Center Parking Fund** – The Town should establish a separate account or enterprise fund to hold surplus parking revenues for the future development of shared parking facilities or other improvements that facilitate parking access (such as those recommended in recommendation 6 below). This fund could also receive other payments such as fees paid in-lieu of providing required on-site parking or public improvement grants.
- **Leased Parking Program** – Utilizing Parking Fund revenues, the Town can offer lease payments and infrastructure improvements to private property owners in exchange for operating public parking on their properties. Under municipal control, the Town can reconfigure abutting lots to improve their aesthetic appeal and parking capacity. The program must include assurance that no development rights are lost, all parking is maintained and secured, and any parking on private land may be returned to private control or redeveloped with sufficient notice.

Poorly Utilized Parking Configurations in Lexington Center



Example of Benefits of Sharing Parking (Waltham Street Lot Before & After)

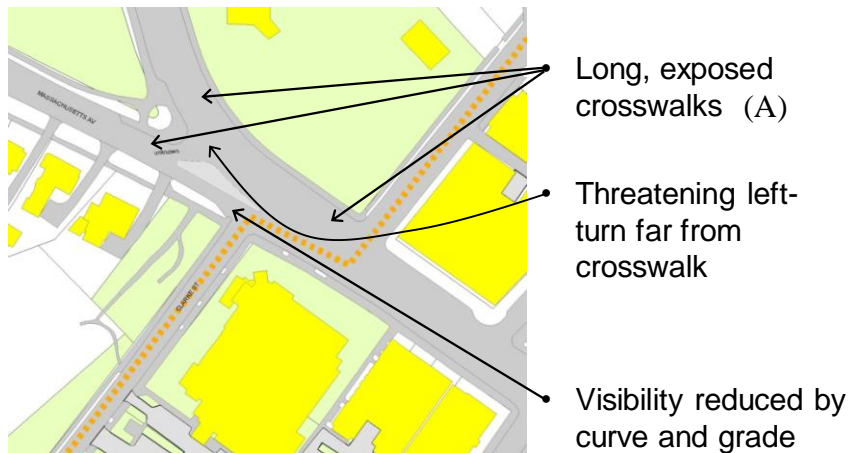


6) Parking Access Improvements

Lexington Center is unfortunately burdened by the impact of through volumes on Massachusetts Avenue. In the core of the Center, the roadway is four-lanes wide, often making pedestrian crossings challenging for those on foot. Not only does greater road width mean more chances for conflict, it represents a time-delay that effectively increases the amount of time it takes to get to or from a more remote parking space. This represents a large disincentive for those seeking to find parking in the Center if an available space is across the Avenue from the final destination. This reality continues east and west of Waltham Street, affecting access to spaces near the Battle Green or Woburn Street.

As part of any planned connectivity improvements, the Town should prioritize those that improve the safety of accessing more remote spaces, which will help to reduce the perception that they are far away and relief pressure on prime spaces. Ideally, Parking Fund revenues can be used for these relatively inexpensive efforts that improve the utilization of more remote parking supplies – before needing to invest greater funds on any shared-parking supply expansion. Several areas to focus on are suggested below.

Access to the Battle Green



Access to Depot Square & Waltham Street Lots



- Many bicycle, pedestrian and vehicle conflicts in small space (B)
- Long blind crossing to lot entrance (C)
- Waiting pedestrians blocked by parked cars (D)
- No gateway to or from lot (E)



Access to Edison Lot



- Missing walkway & obstructions
- Crosswalk to nowhere (F)
- Unwelcoming & unlabeled accessway (G)
- Dangerous corner (H)
- Excessive circulation conflicts



Reconfiguring the Edison Lot (confusing one-ways today)



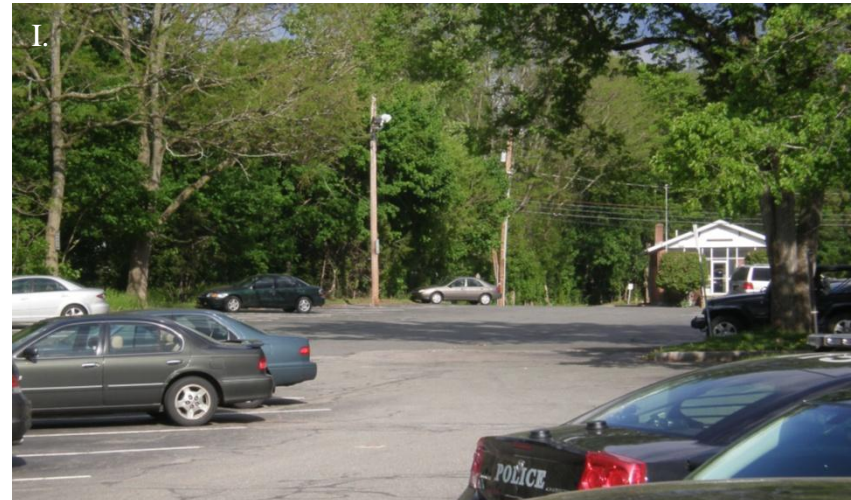
Before (today)



After (redundant circulation replaced by new parking)



Access to Town Hall Lots



7) Coordinated Parking Management

The current division of Lexington's parking management between the Police Department and LexPress has led to imbalances in pricing and resulted in lost revenue for the Town. More importantly, without coordinated management strategies, many of the recommendations in this report cannot go forward. While it is not essential to consolidate operations within a single entity, the management of all resources should be conducted in unison, including setting of prices, hours of operation, and enforcement protocols. With a common goal for parking availability and a shared intent to work in unison, these separate Departments can become effective agents for Lexington Center's broader access, mobility, and economic development goals – ultimately benefitting the agendas of many Town Departments, Town committees, and Center stakeholders.

Long-Term Recommendations

The following longer-term recommendations are no less important than the short-term recommendations. However, it is expected that these typically take communities longer to implement due to procedural needs and capital funding.

- **Uncouple Parking from Land Uses** – Revealing the cost and encumbrance of using land for parking as well as constructing lots or garages is one of the most effective means of reducing its impact and reducing overall parking demand. In places like Lexington Center, not only are parking demands much lower (similar downtowns have an overall parking demand of no more than 1.9 spaces per 1,000 square feet), but providing parking where land values are so high can make new, infill, and change of use developments infeasible. Through zoning ordinances or other arrangements, other communities in the United States have implemented parking cash-out or unbundled parking programs. With parking cash-out, a building's employees are offered a payment if they chose not to park, helping to reduce the business-owner's cost of leasing or maintaining parking. With unbundled parking, new residents are offered their available parking as a separate deed, lease item, or payment, helping to reveal the cost of having one or multiple cars.
- **Lighting and Security Improvements** – While crime is not a large issue in Lexington Center, poor lighting and little human presence in more remote lots and on-street spaces often gives a negative impression of safety – reducing the potential for moving long-term parkers to more remote parking areas. The Town can work to improve pedestrian-scale lighting and orient active nighttime uses towards remote parking areas through public capital and private development projects.
- **Tourist Parking Program** – In addition to distributing the Lexington Center Parking Map to visitors, the Town could work with the National Park Service to encourage visitors to park at remote locations outside of the Center that are served by the Liberty Ride. For those seeking to park in the Center itself, less popular lots such as those by the Town Hall should be signed and advertised for tourist parking – as well as tour bus parking pick-ups (and/or drop-offs). Not only will this encourage the use of parking that is the most underutilized in the Center, it will serve to draw visitors up Massachusetts Avenue to get to/from the Battle Green, bringing potential customers to Lexington Center's businesses.



- **Bicycle Parking Program** – Automobiles are not the only vehicles requiring parking in Lexington Center. While the Town has installed many bicycle racks in the Center, several are not well-placed, and the total quantity is severely lacking given the abundance of cycling in town – not to mention the presence of the Minuteman Bikeway. Bicycle racks are an extremely cost-effective means of reducing the need to drive. The Town should ensure that any future bike parking installations are fully compliant with the guidelines promulgated by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals.

Next Steps

Lexington Center stakeholders have already taken a significant step forward in changing the history of parking operations and management in Lexington. While this report summarizes several strategies for moving forward, the most important strategy will be to ensure that the current dialogue continues. Constructive parking solutions are only possible by engaging all potential users with real parking data and realistic parking strategies that account for all users' needs.

Lexington would be well-served by updating the parking utilization counts conducted in 2001 with more recent data. A broad survey instrument would also be an effective tool for understanding parking preferences and gauging reactions to possible strategies.

The Center is benefitted by a host of stellar options for walking, biking, and riding transit. Through a creative approach to parking management that incentivizes employees and residents to use other modes of transportation, Lexington can realize parking surpluses for years to come without building a single new parking space – all the while improving parking availability for many of the customers and visitors that help make the Center thrive.

